

Serial No. 10/017,644
Filed: December 14, 2001
Page 2 of 5

Examiner: Joseph L. Perrin
Group Art Unit: 1746

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1-8. (Cancelled)

9. (Previously Presented) An appliance for treating at least one cloth item comprising:
a collapsible or expandable container comprising a flexible material, the container defining an interior space for enclosing the at least one cloth item;
a container opening in the flexible material for accessing the interior space;
a humidity provider;
a heating element;
at least one vent;
an air circulation device;
a fastener operable between an opened and a closed condition for selectively opening and closing the container opening; and
an interlock comprising a controller operably coupled to the fastener for locking the fastener in the closed condition during the operation of a refreshing/cleaning cycle to prevent accidental opening of the container during the refreshing/cleaning cycle.

10. (Previously Presented) The appliance according to claim 9, wherein the interlock comprises a locking mechanism operable between a locked and an unlocked condition and operably coupled to the fastener such that when the fastener is in the closed condition and the lock mechanism is in the locked condition, the fastener cannot be moved to the open condition until the lock mechanism is in the unlocked condition.

Serial No. 10/017,644
Filed: December 14, 2001
Page 3 of 5

Examiner: Joseph L. Perrin
Group Art Unit: 1746

11. (Previously Presented) The appliance according to claim 10, wherein the controller controls the refreshing/cleaning cycle and is operably coupled to the locking mechanism such that the controller prevents changing the locking mechanism from the locked to the unlocked condition during the refreshing/cleaning cycle.
12. (Previously Presented) The appliance according to claim 11, wherein the fastener comprises a zipper.
13. (Previously Presented) The appliance according to claim 11 wherein the fastener comprises a vertical zipper and at least one horizontal zipper extending laterally therefrom and the container opening is in the opened condition when the vertical zipper and the at least one horizontal zipper are in an unzipped position.
14. (Previously Presented) The appliance according to claim 13, wherein the at least one horizontal zipper can only be unzipped with the vertical zipper in the unzipped position.
15. (Previously Presented) The appliance according to claim 11, wherein the locking mechanism comprises a reciprocating pin operable between an extended position, wherein the pin engages the fastener in the closed condition to prevent the movement of the fastener to the opened condition, and a retracted position, wherein the fastener is free to move to the opened condition.
16. (Previously Presented) The appliance according to claim 15, wherein the locking mechanism further comprises a driver for reciprocating the pin between the extended and retracted positions.
17. (Previously Presented) The appliance according to claim 16, wherein the driver comprises one of a wax motor and a solenoid operably coupled to the controller.

Serial No. 10/017,644
Filed: December 14, 2001
Page 4 of 5

Examiner: Joseph L. Perrin
Group Art Unit: 1746

18. (Previously Presented) The appliance according to claim 11, and further comprising a sound indicator that emits sound during the refreshing/cleaning cycle.

19. (Previously Presented) The appliance according to claim 18, wherein the sound indicator is operably coupled to the controller, which adjusts the intensity of the emitted sound to indicate the progress of the refreshing/cleaning cycle.

20. (Previously Presented) The appliance according to claim 19, wherein the intensity of said sound is not higher than 70 dB.

21-28. (Cancelled)